

Los Alamos County



Animal Field Guide

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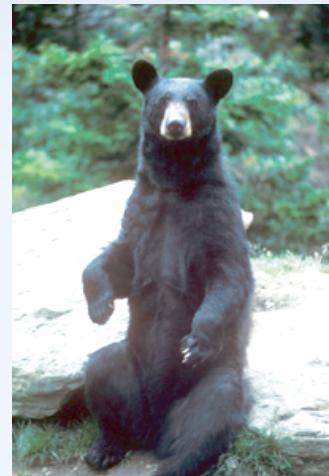
Animal Field Guide

Mammals

Black Bear

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by M. Bender

The State animal of New Mexico, the Black Bear is medium in size and typically black with a brown muzzle. They are found primarily in forested areas in 32 states in the U.S., and have strong, highly curved claws. They are omnivorous and feed on a wide range of foods, including insects, nuts, berries, acorns, grasses, roots, and small mammals.



Black-tailed Jackrabbit

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by George Harrison

A member of the hare family, the Black-tailed Jackrabbit is characterized by distinct long ears tipped with black. Primarily nocturnal, jackrabbits spend most of the day resting in a burrow in the ground. In the evening and night hours, they feed on clover, alfalfa, and woody and dried vegetation. They are common on brushlands, prairies and meadows throughout the southwest.



Coyote

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by John & Karen Hollingsworth

The Coyote is a member of the dog family and can be heard howling at dawn or twilight. Coyotes are very adaptable and will eat small mammals, berries, insects and fruits. Farmers occasionally need to guard against coyotes from eating their livestock.



Kit Fox

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by B. Peterson

The Kit Fox is small with large ears and can run up to 25 miles per hour a short distance. The Kit Fox mainly stays in dens during the day and coming out at night to hunt small mammals, rodents, and insects.

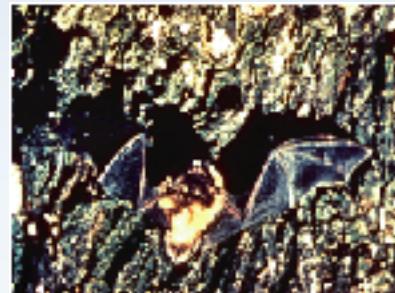


More Mammals

Little Brown Bat

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by W.D. Fritzwater

The Little Brown Bat is very active at night feeding on insects while in flight. They find their food and navigate by using echolocation, sending out high pitch squeaks that bounce off of obstacles. Little Brown Bats hibernate in caves, mines or buildings and can live to be over 10 years old.



Mountain Lion

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by Larry Moats

The Mountain Lion is also known as cougar or panther and can weigh up to 220 pounds. The Mountain Lion travels mostly at night and lives in forests, canyons, and deserts. They mostly eat deer, elk and occasionally porcupine and livestock.



Porcupine

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The Porcupine is known for its quills, up to 30,000, among the hairs of the back and tail. The quills protect against predators and can easily detach and stick into the skin of an attacker. This rodent is heavyset, short-legged, and slow-moving. The nocturnal porcupine is mostly solitary and spends much of its time in trees. Although the porcupine's eyesight is poor it has a good sense of smell and has a vegetarian diet. The Porcupine eats leaves, twigs, green plants and bark in the winter.



Ringtail

The Ringtail has large ears and eyes and is a member of the raccoon family. The name "ringtail" comes from the black rings on the animal's tail. The tail is usually longer than the head and body and provides balance while climbing. It can rotate its hind feet at least 180 degrees, helping it climb up and down steep surfaces.

The Ringtail is nocturnal and feeds on a range of small mammals, birds, insects and plants. Moving often, the ringtail makes its den in caves, rock crevices, tree hollows, rock and brush piles, and abandoned burrows and buildings.



Reptiles

Blacktail Rattlesnake

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by Gary M. Stolz

The Blacktail Rattlesnake can grow to 4 feet long with colors of gray and greenish-yellow and has a black tail. The Blacktail Rattlesnake is not very aggressive and prefers living in lower rocky areas of mountain foothills. They eat mice and small mammals.



Collared Lizard

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by Robert A. Kargas

The Collared Lizard has a long tail and two dark collars around its neck. Adult males have a bright yellow head. The Collared Lizard looks like a miniature dinosaur the way it runs on its back legs with its front legs off the ground and tail in the air. They eat large insects, small snakes and lizards and live among hills and rocks.



Short Horned Lizard

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by Gary M. Stolz

The Short Horned Lizard eats mostly ants, but will also eat grasshoppers and beetles. The wide flat body makes the Short Horned Lizard look like a toad with horns. Predators include hawks and roadrunners. To escape the Short Horned Lizard will burrow into the ground, swell its body and may squirt blood from their eyelids.



Birds

Pintail Duck

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by Stephen Little

The Pintail Duck has a brown head and long pointed tail. They feed in ponds by tipping down with their tail up in the air eating shoots of aquatic plants and small crustaceans. The Pintail Duck also eats seeds, roots, corn, and grains. They can take off flying without a running start. The Pintail Duck spends spring and summer in the north and migrates to the south for the winter.



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Photo credits: U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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More Birds

Raven

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by Gary M. Stolz

The Raven is a glossy black and larger than the crow. Ravens feed on insects, rodents, lizards, frogs, and carcasses of dead animals. They build large stick nests on rock cliff ledges and in tall trees. The Raven can be heard cawing or making a funny gurgle sound.



Roadrunner

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by Gary M. Stolz

The Roadrunner is the state bird of New Mexico and lives in open country, parklands and suburban areas. A member of the Cuckoo family the Roadrunner has a bushy crest of feathers on its head. The Roadrunner is usually seen running very fast, sometimes up to 17 miles per hour. They like to eat snakes, lizards, insects, mice and scorpions.



Sandhill Crane

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by John & Karen Hollingsworth

The Sandhill Crane is a tall, gray bird with a long neck and red cap. They have a wingspan of seven feet. The Sandhill Crane flies and gathers in large groups and can be found in marshes, prairies or fields. When mating the Sandhill Crane dances about while making loud cackling noises. Coyotes and Bobcats often prey on the Sandhill Crane.



Western Meadowlark

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by John & Karen Hollingsworth

The Western Meadowlark is known for its beautiful bird song and has a black V on its yellow breast. The Western Meadowlark can be found in the open country and nesting on the ground in deep grasses. They make narrow trails leading to their nest.



Wild Turkey

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service/photo by Gary M. Stolz

The Wild Turkey can be found roosting at night up in tall trees. Despite their large size Wild Turkeys are fast runners and good flyers. The male will perform strutting and fanning its tail to attract females. The Wild Turkey eats nuts, berries, grass, insects and fruits. They are good at hiding from bobcats, coyotes and raccoon predators.





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